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Midlothian NOW MAGAZINE

August 2007



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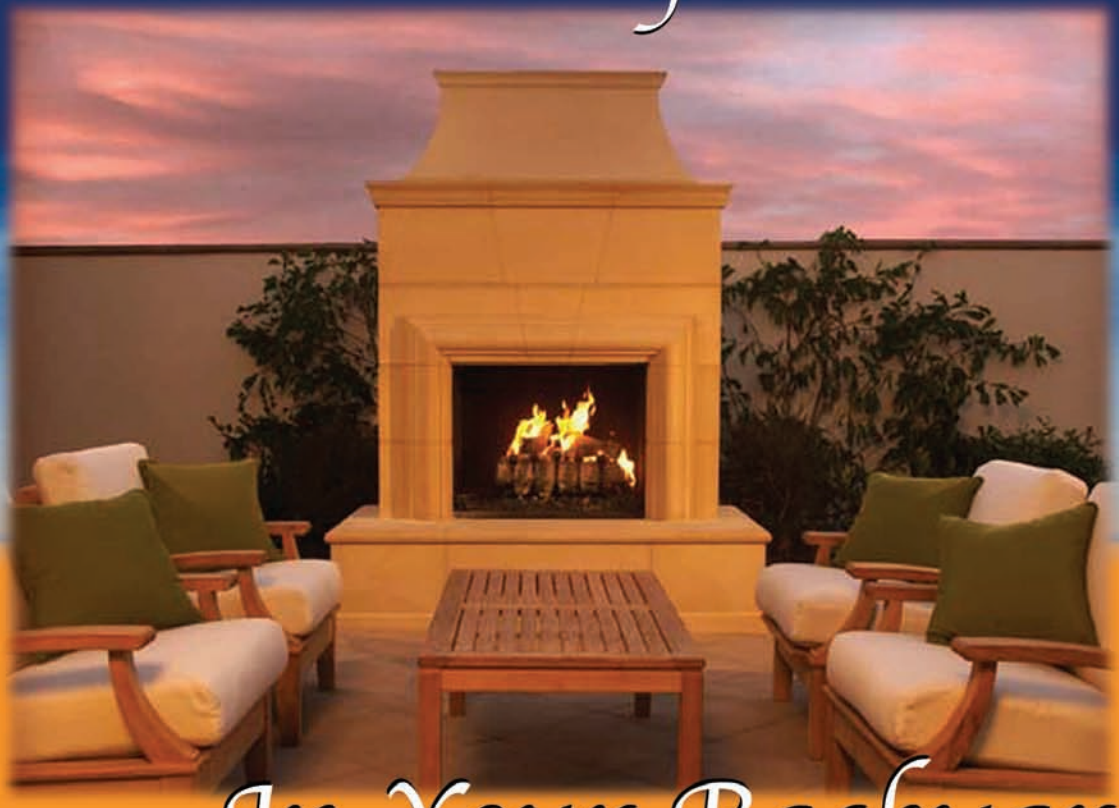
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Midlothian NOW MAGAZINE
The Community Magazine Serving Midlothian and the Surrounding Area

Editor's Note



Hello, Midlothian!

We have a star in Midlothian! Fallon Franklin, a 2000 graduate of Midlothian High School, recently appeared on the TV show *America's Got Talent*; and Fallon is loaded with talent. Congratulations for making it to the Las Vegas callbacks! We wish her all the best as she pursues her career.

The lazy days of summer are starting to wind down, but you still have time to get in that vacation you promised yourself before time runs out. If you are just too hot to stir yourself, grab a big glass of iced lemonade, sit back, relax and read about a family of five generations of females living here in Midlothian.

Also, Fallon is not the only star we have. Elizabeth Cloud, as a professional barrel racer, shines brightly in our midst every day. Dean McGuire is Duncanville's basketball coach. He led his team to the state championship last year, but he calls Midlothian home. Come inside Dean and Denise's place in our home feature.

Betty Tryon
Midlothian Editor











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The Ties That Bind

— By Betty Tryon



Representing five generations of one Midlothian family are pictured left to right (standing) Paula Boykin, Connie Rhymes, Amber Spence and baby Eva. (sitting) Georgia Tallout.

When 9-month-old baby Eva was born, she entered life gently bound together with the five — yes, five — generations of mothers and daughters in her family, all of whom live in Midlothian. Eva's great-great-grandmother, Georgia Tallent, presides over the family as the lead matriarch. Georgia's daughter, Paula Boykin, is Eva's great-grandmother. Paula's daughter, Connie Rhynes, is the proud grandmother and Connie's daughter, Amber Spence, is the mother of baby Eva. This feminine family line brings a bit of family history to our city.

Georgia Tallent [known locally as Mama Bob], is a native of Blue Ridge, Texas. She moved with her husband and children to Oak Cliff more than 50 years ago. The family's history in Midlothian began when her daughter, Paula Boykin, and her family settled here in 1978. Paula said, "I love animals, but in Oak Cliff where I grew up, we couldn't have them where we lived. ... When we moved, we were able to get more land and could raise a lot of animals. My son showed pigs in his agriculture class." In Midlothian, Paula was able to care for a menagerie of pets, including a horse, chickens, geese, pigs, goats and ducks.

"We did move to Austin for 11 years," Paula said. "My mother started living with us at that time. While we were living there, we were [also] building a house here in Midlothian. We got tired of going back and forth, so we decided to move back here to our new home. We like it in Midlothian and wanted to retire here." Paula is currently employed as payroll and benefits administrator in the Venus

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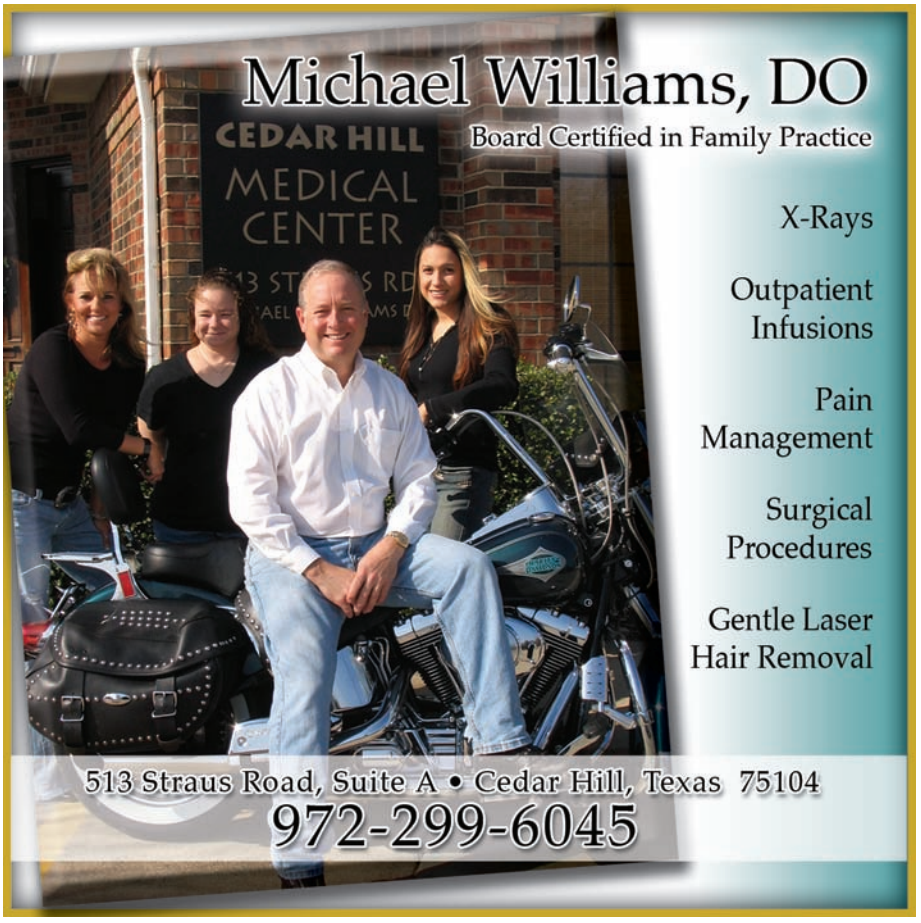


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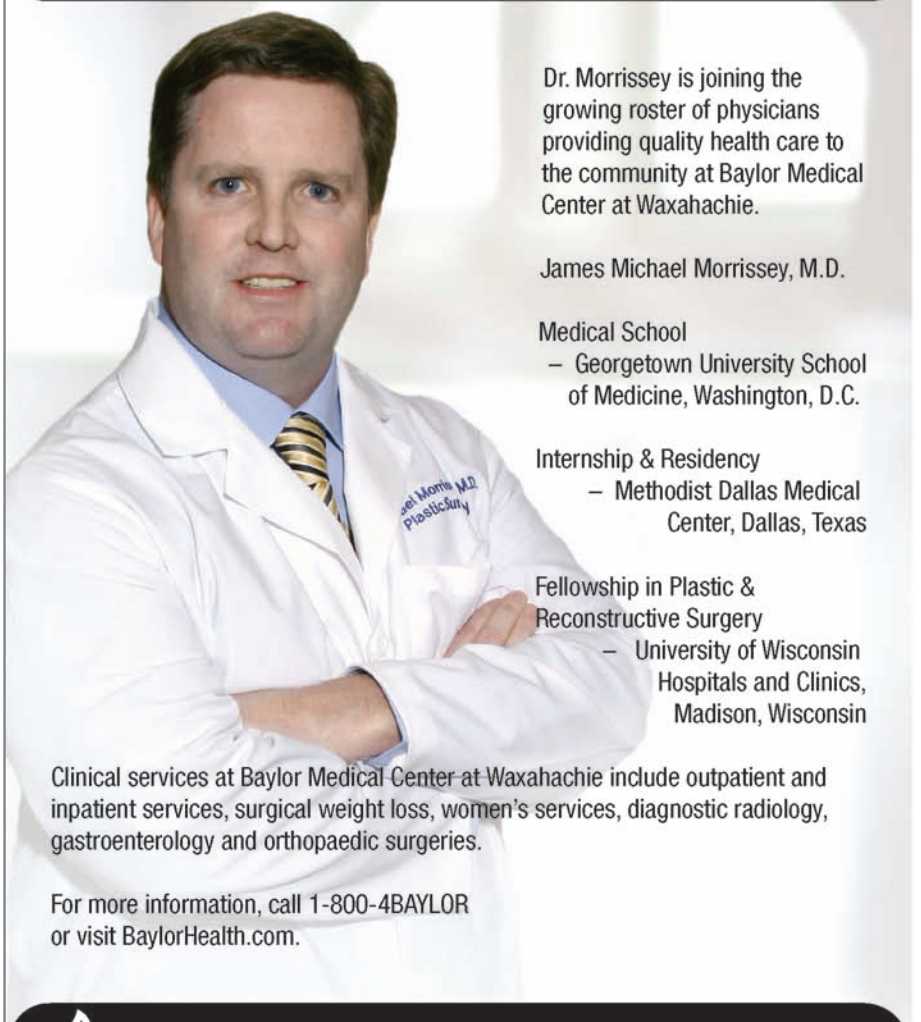
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Independent School District.

Being a member of five generations of females living in Midlothian is not Paula's only claim to fame. She and her husband started the soccer league in Midlothian. Their journey in soccer began when they lived in Oak Cliff. They became involved when one of

It is the communication that has kept them strong and close — into their fifth generation.

their children joined a team. "We were the type of parents who went to every practice and stayed while the kids practiced," Paula commented. They learned the techniques of soccer and the rules of the game in Oak Cliff and started coaching there.

After moving to Midlothian, they continued coaching. "As coaches in Midlothian, every Saturday we would meet the kids in Kimmel Park, put them in the pick-up and take them to DeSoto, Oak Cliff or Duncanville, wherever we were playing that day. We had the kids all day long. My husband taught the proper techniques and we won all our games," Paula said.

Connie Rhynes, Paula's daughter, eventually played additional sports. "When I was in high school, I was a member of the JV volleyball team," she said. "I also participated in the school's vocation program in my junior and senior year." She recalled being in one of the Fall Festival beauty pageants and in the school flag corps. She

graduated from Midlothian High school in 1981. Soon after graduating, she went to work at Ryder and has been there for 21 years. While working at Ryder she managed to get her associate's degree in business at Navarro College. "It took awhile to get through school because I never missed any of my kids games. In the evening, we would all sit down together to do our homework. They would show me their grades, and I would show them mine!"

Connie's daughter, Amber, graduated from Midlothian High School in 2006, and has given birth to little Eva, the fifth generation of the family. Presently, Amber stays busy as a stay-at-home mom.

Having lived here for many years, Paula has seen many changes to the city. She said, "Back then, there wasn't all this new stuff coming in [referring to new businesses moving into city]. Dairy Queen closed at 8 p.m., and you had to cross the railroad tracks to leave or come into town. I was always getting stopped. ... David's used to be the only grocery store here; its first location was behind the fire station. There was only one doctor in Midlothian, and he was very good at treating poison ivy! The Ben Franklin store used to be in the location where Napa and Family Dollar are now."

Connie also reminisced, "Dee Tee's and Dairy Queen were the only places to eat out. I remember when my son took Ag in school, they had to put up tents outside of the high school. Now they have their own building. J.R. Irvin was the middle school. The old administration building was an elementary school. Laura Jenkins, which is now a day care facility, was an elementary school."

Connie attributed their family strength to their closeness and age. "My mom and I have been more like sisters. We are willing to help each other out when needed. For example, I have a job that is more flexible, [so I] can take my grandmother to the beauty







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salon. This gives me an opportunity to spend time with her also. We always check on each other. I talk to my daughter every day. I e-mail my son often when he is on a ship [son, Zach, is in the military]. One of the things my mom and I enjoy doing is going to shop the day after Thanksgiving. It



Georgia Tallent holds her great-great-granddaughter Eva.

has become a tradition with us. We go really early like 4 or 5 a.m.; whenever the store opens, we're there," she said.

Paula agreed with Connie about their closeness and added, "When our kids were young, we always did everything with them. If they couldn't go, we didn't either. As a family, we were very active in sports and on the go all the time. I try not to interfere in my kids' lives."

This family is living on many of the foundations of a solid family. They interact frequently with one another; they have feelings of concern for each other and show care for one another. It is the communication that has kept them strong and close — into their fifth generation. NOW



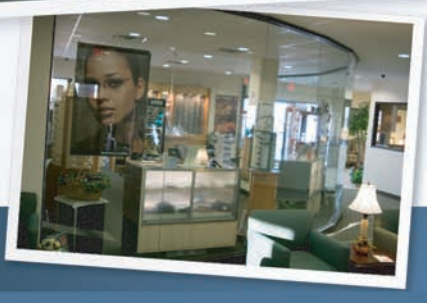
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Comfortable, Cozy and Inviting

— By Sandra McIntosh

Lush green lawns flow easily from one yard to the next in the neighborhood Dean and Denise McGuire call home. It is a testament of how blessed they feel being right where they are supposed to be. "Our neighborhood is one within itself," Denise said. "I feel like God planted us here, and it's just phenomenal!"

Before relocating to Midlothian three years ago, Dean and Denise were quite content in Duncanville. In fact, their first meeting, over 18 years ago, was in the teacher's

At Home With Dean and Denise McGuire





lounge at the high school where they were both gainfully employed at that time. "It was my first year as the P.E. teacher," Dean said. "I came for two years and ended up staying. I thought I'd move back to the farming community northwest of Lubbock where I'd grown



up, but I got married instead." This coming school year will mark the beginning of Dean's 22nd year at the Duncanville Independent School District. He will be returning to the high school as a state champion basketball coach.

After they exchanged vows in a backyard wedding, Dean, Denise and her two small sons became a family. Today, the children are grown and live in the Crystal Forest area; so, commuting from one place to another has become a common weekly trip. "We visited our son, daughter-in-law and three













grandchildren one day," Denise remembered. "I wanted to be close to the kids, so we started looking in the general area." It was during this time of "looking" that the McGuires came upon the Roger Olson "spec home" they have grown to love today.

Dean and Denise are the first owners of the two-story, three-bedroom, four-bath home, which boasts of no single style. In fact, Denise calls it "eclectic" because she has been able to successfully incorporate antiques, modern pieces from her home decor business and a vast array of collectibles to create 3,700-square feet of comfortable, cozy, inviting living space.

Strolling up the sidewalk is a treat all by itself. The tiered landscaping is immaculate with the flowers in full bloom. One thing that catches the observant eye is a tree stump — the focal point of the front flowerbed. "It's an old stump we brought back from









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one of our trips to Red River, New Mexico," Dean said. "We also have daisies in the back that survived the trip from Red River," Denise added. "It was the pine trees that didn't make it."

The daisies and the stump remind them of a very special individual who lives in Red River. In fact, she is the reason they go back to visit as often as their schedules allow. "She is an 86-year-old psychologist who counsels free of charge," Denise explained. "She led me to the Lord, and she's also the reason we are the proud owners of a Vizsla, a red Hungarian pointer."

The home's exterior is a perfect mix of stone and brick. The accents of rustic stone and the slate porch lend to the home's friendly atmosphere.

Entering directly into the family area, you automatically stop for a moment to take in the beauty of rich leather furniture, leopard-print accents and a breathtaking view of the backyard. The kitchen and breakfast nook are easily seen from the family area, giving the entire space the great room effect — perfect for entertaining and family gatherings. The kitchen has become one of their favorite places to "eat out" since moving to Midlothian. "We used to eat out all the time," Dean said. "We are much more comfortable eating at home now."

Upon close inspection, the kitchen tabletop is found to be an old barn door. The table itself sits higher than normal, so chairs were designed and constructed by Tiza Village to allow for the difference in height. "Regular kitchen chairs were too short," Dean said, "and bar stools were too tall. We had to have something in-between."

The home, when on the market, boasted a formal dining room. Since the McGuires moved in, there's no such room to be found. "We are not formal people," Denise added. "We

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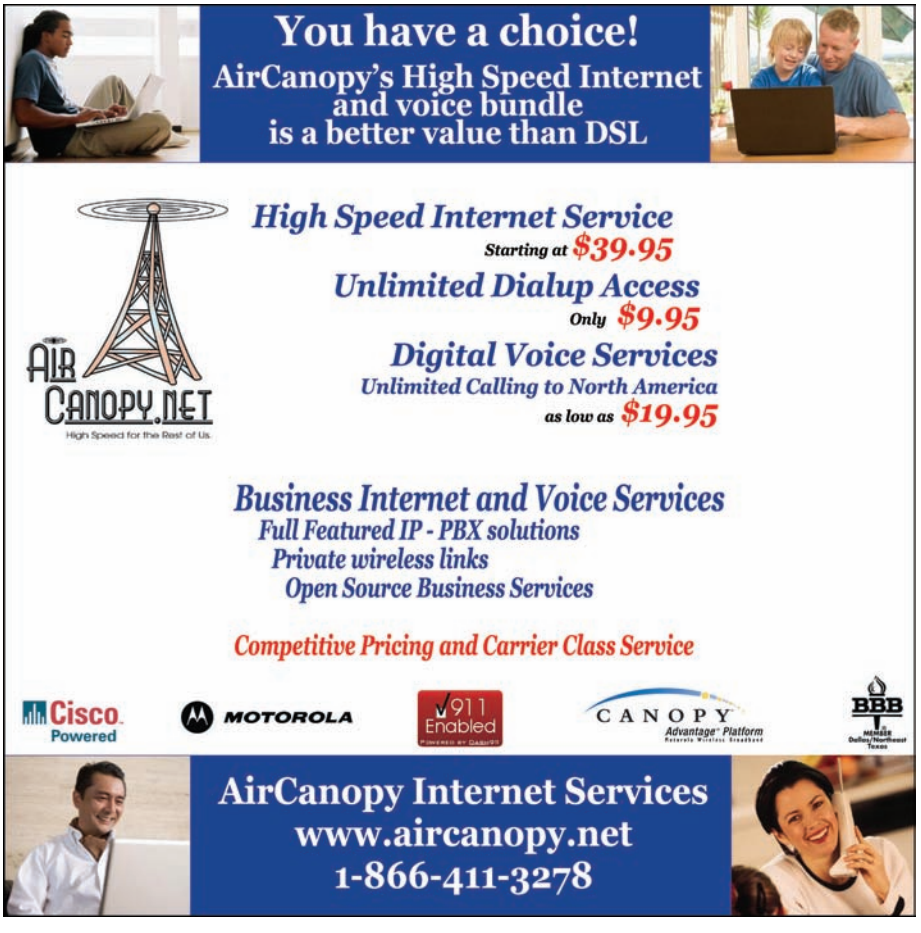
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converted that space into a comfy seating area." During the holidays, Denise said the room houses a family of Christmas trees — small, medium and large. "It's the room where we can all gather together on the floor," she said. "We can open gifts and not worry about the mess."

The grandchildren played a big part in naming the extra bedrooms. The animal room is decorated with four-legged creatures of the jungle. A lion rests beside a fern atop the bed. A giraffe peeks out from greenery arranged on the antique tallboy dresser that at one time belonged to Dean's grandmother. There is even a leopard-print fur phone on the bedside table. The Lego room is decorated in Victorian flair. A Jack-and-Jill bathroom, overflowing with palm trees, separates the two bedrooms. Accents throughout include animal prints and peacock feathers.

Other unique features of this home's interior include a home gym and den upstairs, a home office, a master suite at the far end of the house with a wrap-around fireplace, mock traverse windows, display mantles above all the windows and a large "cross" collection. "One of them is from Rome. It was blessed at the Vatican," Denise said, referring to a special cross her son brought back from a trip he took. "There are many that were gifts, as well as souvenirs."

To not mention the view from the bank of windows in the family room and kitchen, would be a mistake. "We had the pool built a year after we moved in," Dean said. "Even though Roger isn't a pool builder, we hired him for the job because we wanted it to flow with the house. We wanted it to match."

Denise wanted the area around the pool to appear as natural as if it had been there all along. She has accomplished that with the use of plants, stones, floral arrangements and garden art. "It's like an oasis," she said. "There's no need to go on vacation anymore. We have the perfect vacation spot right here."



When they first moved in, Denise remembers passing out a short questionnaire to all her new neighbors. That simple gesture grew into a homeowner's group with a great information directory. "Close relationships with your neighbors are important," she said. "We are able to look out for one another and help each other when there's a need. It's the weekly cookouts and the camaraderie that make living here so special."





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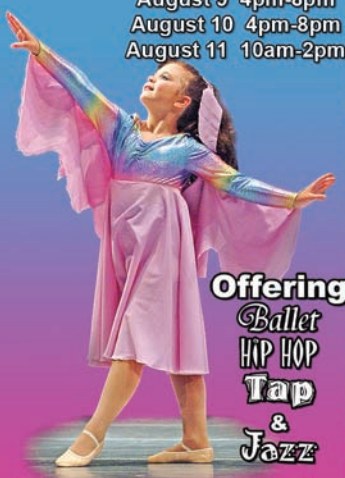
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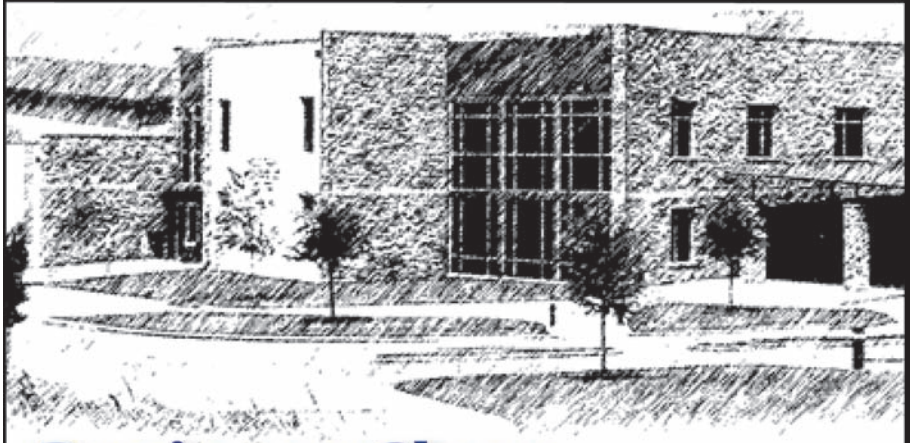


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The Art of. Growing

— By Alex Allred



By the 20th century, two artists had emerged as household names. Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse were both flamboyant and expressive. While Picasso was given to more outrageous behavior – like cutting off his ear to impress a woman – both men perpetuated the notion that good artists have to be dark, brooding and unloved to create a masterpiece. Karen May, however, defies this stereotype of an oil on canvas painter.

Unlike these former artists, Karen grew up in a loving home that embraced and encouraged her artistic interests. "My mother always said her only talent was having talented kids," she laughed, "but I disagree." Karen said that for as long as she can remember, music and art were always in her life. As the oldest of five children, Karen played the piano, organ and flute. In her teens, she developed a real interest in artwork, but would not become a serious painter until she had married and reared three children of her own.

When she took an early retirement from Southwestern Bell, the timing was right. Karen was already leaps and bounds ahead of most would-be artists. If polled, most artists would say the thing that holds them back the most is their fear of rejection or ridicule. Truly, it is difficult for artists to create freely.

In his day, Matisse was heavily critical of his fellow artists, saying that they were unable to embrace their true talents because of fear of being ridiculed. "An artist," he had said, "should never be a prisoner of himself, prisoner of style, prisoner of reputation, prisoner of success …"

Again, Karen defies this critique. She is the exact opposite of dark and brooding. She is an engaging woman who exudes light and warmth. She is carefree and easy with a smile.

"She's not afraid to try new things," said Kristin, one of Karen's daughters. "The only thing is, she'll change it [a painting] seven times, trying to make it perfect."

"I have a family of critics," Karen laughed. In reality, however, her family is anything but critical of her work.

"I am extremely blessed to have my husband," Karen said. "He's always encouraging me. He calls himself my set-up man." Mike, her husband of 34 years, attends the art festivals and craft shows with Karen, helping her set up her displays.

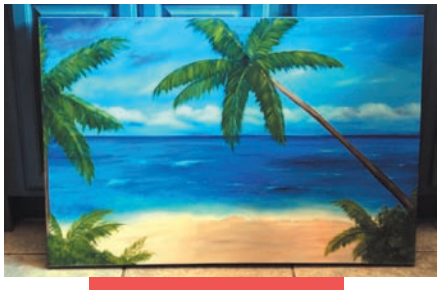
"He tells me, 'I don't care if you never sell a piece as long as you're happy.' How can you not grow with that?"

Certainly, if there was any word to describe Karen the artist, it is growth. Over the years, she began to realize just how talented she was when friends and family began fighting over her paintings. "People always fought over Mom's paintings

at Christmastime," Kristin said. As a solution, Karen's family celebrates a holiday Chinese gift exchange. "But," Kristin said, "everyone still wants Mom's paintings."

When similar scuffles occurred over her artwork during church gift exchanges, Karen realized that her talent had grown beyond a hobby. She realized that she is an artist also.

As the saying goes, the world is her canvas. Using bright, rich colors, Karen





has painted tropical beach scenes, exotic animals, rustic south-of-the-border settings and gorgeous flowers — all so real they have been mistaken for actual photos, or as in one case, a screen saver.

In many instances, her pictures are a collage of different scenes she has admired. In one particular beach painting, the sky is from a mountainous view she admired. She simply blended it into the perfect beach setting. Today, that portrait hangs in the apartment of her daughters, Stephanie and Kristin.









Karen May Originals are also currently displayed in the Midlothian Community Center, but until recently, her paintings have remained close to home — mostly among friends and family. When she attended her first big art show in Dallas, at the City Arts Festival, she watched with tremendous pride as art enthusiasts complimented her work.

Where Matisse cautioned his fellow artists against feelings of restriction or repression, Karen has only felt freedom. With this "blessing" comes a new challenge.



"It's going to be hard to let go of this," Karen said of her latest creation. Giant red roses, a painting she has aptly titled, *The Roses*, grace a 24 x 48 canvas. To see the work, however, is quite another story. Intricate detail and shading with dark, rich coloring captivate the canvas. "It's a lot like letting go of your baby," Karen joked, and turning to her daughter, said, "Sorry."

Her daughter merely shrugged. Kristin, as does the entire family, knows the love and devotion Karen puts into each painting. It is one of the reasons everyone fights to possess a Karen May masterpiece. For the family that is so loving and devoted to each other, for the family that is so encouraging and supportive of its members, there is an even greater value placed upon a piece of art that could encompass all those emotions.

For Karen, exposing other people to art and all that goes with it is the most important gift she can offer. NOW

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A Barrel of Speed



— By Betty Tryon

The petite blond with a big smile took confident strides toward her destiny. It waited patiently wrapped in 1,174 pounds of muscled horseflesh. Swinging into the saddle, Elizabeth Cloud showed why she is a professional barrel racer. Galloping at about 30 miles an hour for a mere 90 feet, she cued the horse to slow down, make a turn within a two- to three-foot radius around a barrel and speed back to the starting line. She did all of this within 15 seconds.

Barrel racing is a timed rodeo sport where one hundredths of a second can mean the difference between winning or losing. She said, "I remember watching the 1989 National Finals Rodeo when I was 8 years old. I was hooked from that point on. I have every video of NFR since then. The Finals is the Super Bowl of our sport. Only the top 15 people of each event can enter."

Elizabeth is very close to reaching her goal of being in the national finals. In 2006, she was among the top 30 barrel-race riders in the world. She explained, "I was at the Pro Rodeo in Huntsville, and the horse I was on tore his tendon so I was sidelined. I needed another horse to compete. It takes a special equine athlete to take his place. It took me over a year to buy Grace, the horse I race with now. Fly, the horse that was injured, just got back from aqua therapy. I am now in a position where I have the building blocks for 2008. The Lord has blessed me with two animals that we can go and get back out there."

Elizabeth's love for horses started long before she saw the finals at age 8. Mandy Cloud, Elizabeth's mom, said, "When she was about 6 to 8 months old, her Daddy [Jim Cloud] would prop her up on the horse. She was 5 years old when we started taking her out riding by herself. She used to say all the time, 'Daddy, when can I run?' And, he would always say, 'We've got to get this first. You're not ready yet!' Jim gave her the fundamentals."



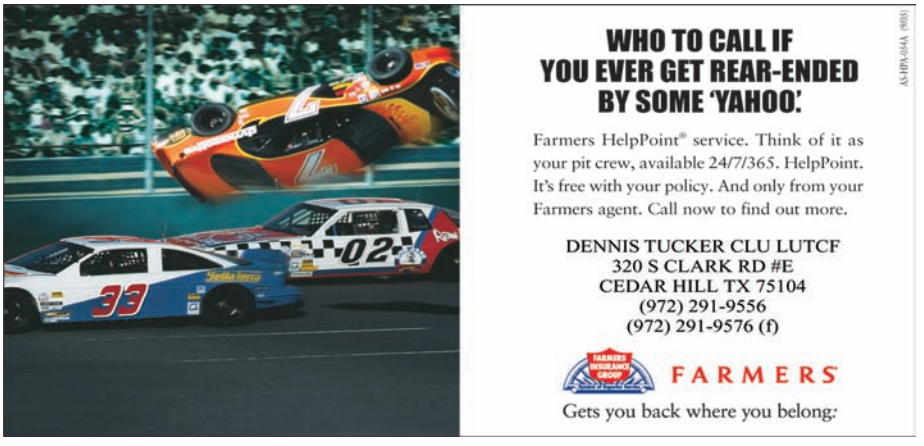




Elizabeth remembers vividly her first rodeo. "It was when I was 5 years old and we lived in a small town in Louisiana where everyone knew everyone else," she said. "I told everybody I was running barrels in the rodeo. I rode an old babysitter horse named Bingo. We got there five hours before the rodeo started. I was so excited that I rode Bingo the whole time. When it was time to start the rodeo, he was worn out. I don't know if it was because he was tired or if he was just nervous of the crowd, but when we got to the first barrel, he vapor-locked on me. I had on little red boots, and my mom said they







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looked like hummingbird wings because I was kicking them so fast. No matter what I did, that horse would not move!"

She has come a long way since then. Elizabeth explained, "This is now a business with us. I now compete professionally. The horses are on a feed program and vitamins. We have rodeo competitions all over the U.S. This is what we do." The "we" for Elizabeth includes her mom and dad. Mandy said, "Everyone has a job. I take care of everyone, but Elizabeth is the lead. Jim keeps the truck and trailer in shape."


"I remember watching the 1989 National Finals Rodeo when I was 8 years old. I was hooked from that point on.

Elizabeth said, "A race team has a pit crew behind the scenes. My family is my pit crew. Our bottom line is making sure the horses are safe and comfortable. My barrel racing horses are top athletes just like professional football or professional basketball players. They go to a chiropractor, have acupuncture and massages, magnetic therapy and aqua therapy. Aqua therapy is where the horse is led into a pool of water with a treadmill in it. My horses have a great life."

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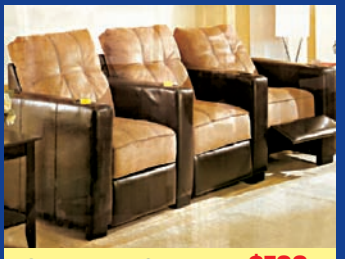

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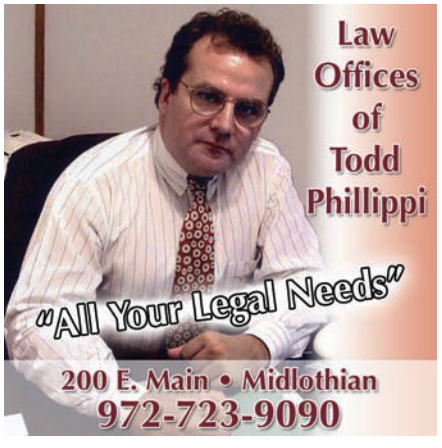
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Elizabeth's first big career win was in high school. She stated, "I made the National High School Rodeo Finals when I was in high school. I qualified for the College National Finals Rodeo. Only three kids from each region can compete out of thousands of kids. My first professional win was in Liberty, Texas' Pro Rodeo in 2005." Elizabeth went to college on a scholarship at Sam Houston State University and graduated with a major in agriculture business and a minor in animal science.



"My horses have a great life."

Thankfully, Elizabeth has not had a serious injury while horseback riding, but she suffered a serious car accident at age 14 that shattered her pelvis, required pins in her shoulder, broke her left collarbone and broke the bottom three vertebrae in her back. She also had to have her ear stitched back on. Not many people could come back from such injuries as strongly as she has.

Elizabeth said, "The Lord has blessed me so much. I couldn't do it without my parents support. I have never come out of the arena with them angry with me. We are definitely Team Cloud!" NOW

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Honorable Work

— By Betty Tryon



"The average service call is about two hours. You can only go as fast as the computer."

As a single dad and former member of the Marine Corps, responsibility and personal integrity are high on the list of character traits for Mike Little, owner of Star Tech Computer Support. He explained, "I have three children ages 4, 8, and 10. I worked for a large company in Virginia and transferred to Midlothian in 2006. I needed a work schedule that was more flexible for my children, so I started my own company.

"I offer computer support and mostly on-site repair services," he said. "A client will call with a computer problem of running too slow because of virus and spyware problems. I can also set up your wireless network with encryption. I can do computer upgrades, in-home networking and hardware and software diagnostic tests."

The training Mike received in the Marine Corps was not in computers but in photography. He explained, "I worked in D.C. at the Pentagon. The Marine Corps taught me photography. I was able to continue working in that field when I left."

Although Mike enjoyed photography, he wanted to search for different challenges, and that led him to the computer industry. "I liked the hands-on part of it. There is a lot of troubleshooting and diagnostics that is part of it. You have to be very patient. I'm a patient person. My temperament is such that I don't let things stress me. Every computer is different. The average service call is about two hours. You can only go as fast as the computer. You can't rush it."

"It's about honoring your word. The Marine Corps instilled that in me."

Mike's job history in working for a large company prepared him for working with customers on his own. "I've been in retail and know how to deal with a customer. I try to satisfy my customers because, as in any business, if you do things right they will tell others. I try to do what I can to satisfy my client."

Mike gained his computer knowledge while living in Virginia by attending tech school and taking courses. His instruction included A+ Certification course – basic for hardware, Network+ Course and Microsoft Certified System Engineer Course.

As any businessperson will attest, starting your own business has its own unique set of challenges. Mike said, "I

would say that advertising is my biggest financial challenge. I have been fairly successful with advertising and have received a lot of business from it. I look more for referrals from clients to friends and neighbors. I offer more personal service to my



clients. I am the only staff person, so you would deal with me and only me. If something happens and I have to go back out, it won't be a different person. There is a lot of personal data on a computer, and I am very sensitive to that. My customers can trust me. When I set up an appointment, I am on time, all the time. It's about honoring your word. The Marine Corps instilled that in me."

Mike is about to make another life changing decision. He is looking forward to getting married this month to Donna, and appreciates the fact that he can organize his work schedule and have time for his family.

You can reach Mike at (214) 577-5303, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. NOW











Tree Hugging

— By Betty Tryon

Many of us have a desire to make the world a better place. However, despite the best of intentions, sometimes it is hard to get started. Fourteen-year-old Rachel Nelson is on a mission. This Frank Seale Middle School student wants to plant more trees in Midlothian. Trees have been proven to improve our air quality. "I want to place trees strategically around town. There are a lot of places in town where new trees are needed — for example, in the new construction areas. The city would benefit health-wise and environmentally. We benefit from the oxygen that comes from the trees and the carbon dioxide we give off, the trees take in."

Rachel's desire to have more trees planted here began at a soccer game. She said, "We were at Hawkins Spring Park with all the soccer fields, and I saw that all of these trees were being cut down for a new fence. I was sad to see that, because trees in the park make it more enjoyable, especially in the summer. In a class I was taking in the seventh grade, Future Problem Solvers, I was a part of a team of four people. We were trying to think of a class project we would work on in the eighth grade, and we thought about planting trees. Unfortunately, the idea fell apart and we went with a different project. I want this to be a team activity, but I am willing to do it alone if necessary."

Help may be on the horizon for her. Jim Berman, the Parks and Recreation Manager for Midlothian has initiated a program titled "Midlothian Forever Green." He said, "This is a new program that has been in effect for one year. We started a tree nursery that will someday be a tree farm. We have the equipment to move trees that are four inches in caliber to a different location instead of cutting them down. If you look at an aerial map of Midlothian, you would see a concentration of trees by creeks and streams. Midlothian has a history of being a rural farming area, and many of the trees have been stripped from the land. We would like to replace them. I know there is concern about pollution and trees would act as a filter."

Trees can greatly affect the environment. Less soil erosion occurs when trees are present. They can deflect serious weather hazards such as hail or sleet as well. Rachel said, "People will keep living in Midlothian, and how we live here determines how the environment will be affected. We have greater pollution in the city than in rural areas and all of that affects the environment also. I tell my classmates that sooner

or later it will catch up to you, so it is better to act now. Recycling that piece of paper or that empty coke can is a lot better than throwing it on the side of the road."

The presence of trees brings much value to an area. Besides the obvious visual enjoyment, landscaped homes with trees are a great investment



because the home is more valuable. You can lower energy costs by having your home shaded with trees; also, when the weather gets cold, trees provide a windbreak. Rachel stated, "There are global warming issues that everyone should be concerned about because Texas is already hot enough!

"My family has always been big on environmental issues. My dad works for the EPA in the water department for water quality standards. Our family recycles as much paper, plastic and other materials as we can. I try to conserve as







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much water as possible and keep trash picked up out of the yard."

Another reason Rachel wants to bring more trees to Midlothian is she has a goal to honor Midlothian's own Captain Lyle Gordon, killed in Iraq. She explained, "He was a pilot in Iraq with his unit flying helicopters. It went down and everyone in the copter was killed. I am very close to his mom who was one of my teachers. I would like the plaque to be placed at the cabin downtown with some trees strategically placed around the cabin. It is a high-traffic area and that makes it easier for everyone to see it. It will be a plaque to honor all of the soldiers in Midlothian. I think having the trees there will make it a more pleasant experience."

"We benefit from the oxygen that comes from the trees and the carbon dioxide we give off, the trees take in."

Rachel continues her efforts to bring the project to life. "I am continuing to research my options. I saw an ad in a magazine where you could buy saplings for 10 cents. That is something my classmates and I could do. I mean, 10 cents is great! I am also going to try to continue raising funds for the project."

Whether Rachel joins the Midlothian Forever Green Project or partners with her classmates, she is determined to make Midlothian a better place. Hopefully, Rachel's classmates will catch her enthusiasm and devote more of their time and energy to keeping our environment clean and green. NOW

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Ribbon cuttings were held at several locations in Midlothian. Shown, top row from left, are Mission Midlothian and Koehler Heating and Air. Shown, middle row from left, are Nanotech Energy Solutions and Erika Acker with The Pampered Chef. Shown, bottom row from left to right, are REACH Council in Midlothian and Assistance Dogs of Texas.

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The Midlothian Chamber of Commerce held several more ribbon cuttings recently. Shown, top row from left, are the law offices of Vernon L. Witherspoon and Toby Toberny with Midlothian Hobbies/Mr. Fix-It. Shown, middle row from left, is The Flower Shoppe J&H Florist and Lozano Concrete. The new businesses on the bottom row, from left, are SERVPRO of Ellis County and Jason Brown, Inc.



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Look Who's Cooking

— By Melinda Hines

In the Kitchen with Lavada Condo

Lavada grew up in a large family where every family member did what they could to help out. "We lived in the country and everybody just pitched in," Lavada said. "My job was to help cook and do dishes."

She recalled watching her mom cook and picking up her techniques, although Lavada usually follows recipes closely. "I go by recipes, not like Momma used to cook, with a pinch of this and a pinch of that," she explained. "Her recipes always turned out, but when I cook that way sometimes mine don't."

Lavada enjoys cooking for her own family, especially baking. "There are 16 people in our family that gather for the holidays, including seven grandchildren," she said. "We have a good time eating our family favorites." NOW

STACKED ENCHILADAS

28-oz. can red enchilada sauce
1 pkg. corn tortillas
oil for frying
2 large chopped onions
1 1⁄2 lbs. grated cheddar cheese
2 fried eggs
black pepper, garlic powder, seasoning salt to taste
2 chopped tomatoes
1⁄2 head of lettuce

Heat enchilada sauce in skillet. Fry each tortilla in oil in another skillet until tender. Dip tortilla in the red sauce; place on serving plate. Add onions and cheese; stack until you reach desired serving. Top with fried eggs lettuce and tomatoes.

CABBAGE SLAW

3 lbs. shredded cabbage
1 chopped green bell pepper
2 medium onions, chopped

VINEGAR MIXTURE:

1 cup vinegar
1 1⁄2 cups sugar
3⁄4 cup oil
1 tsp. celery seed
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. sesame seed

In a large bowl, combine cabbage, bell pepper and onion. In a large saucepan, bring vinegar mixture to a rolling boil; pour over cabbage mixture.

GERTRUDE ARMSTRONG CAKE

CAKE:

2 cups sugar
2 cups flour
1⁄2 cup shortening
1 stick butter
1 cup water
1 Tbsp. cocoa
1⁄2 cup buttermilk
1 tsp. baking soda



2 eggs
1 tsp. vanilla

ICING:

1 tsp. vanilla
1 stick butter
4 Tbsp. cocoa
6 Tbsp. milk
1-lb. box powdered sugar
1 cup nuts

CAKE INSTRUCTIONS: Sift together the sugar and flour. In saucepan, combine shortening, butter, water and cocoa. Bring to a boil; pour over flour mixture. Add buttermilk, baking soda, eggs and vanilla. Bake at 350 F for 30 minutes on cookie sheet. *ICING INSTRUCTIONS*: Bring the vanilla, butter, cocoa and milk to a boil; add the powdered sugar. Stir in nuts; spread over cake while both are still hot.

HASH BROWN CASSEROLE

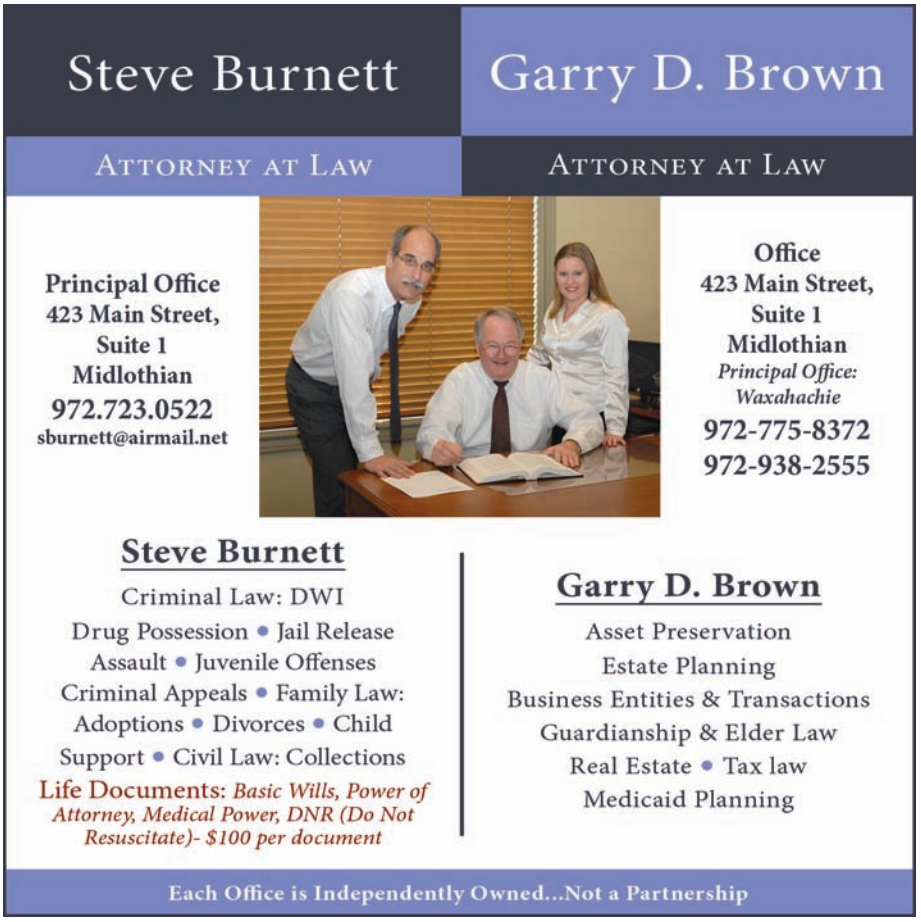
2 lbs. frozen hash brown potatoes
1 stick butter
1 10.5-oz. can cream of chicken soup
16-oz. French onion dip
2 cups shredded cheese
Additional cheese or potato chips

Pour potatoes in a large bowl. In a separate bowl melt the butter in the microwave. Combine the soup and dip with the butter; pour over the potatoes. Mix well; add the cheese. Pour into a baking dish; bake at 350 F for 1 hour. Sprinkle with potato chips or cheese; cook 5 minutes longer.

APRICOT COCONUT BALLS

1 lb. dried apricots, chopped
1 14-oz. can sweetened condensed milk
1 1/2 cups chopped pecans
1 8-oz. bag coconut

Combine all ingredients; mix well. Chill for 30 minutes; form into balls and roll in powdered sugar. Keep hands moist as mixture will be very sticky.









Financial Literacy:

Survey Finds Young Adults are Optimistic About Their Financial Future

— By Clay Money, CLU, LUTCF



How confident are you about your financial future? A recent report detailing the State of America's Financial Education (SAFE) shows two-thirds of young adults and recent graduates are optimistic about their financial outlook despite the country's economic difficulties and their present state of financial readiness.

The report, conducted by NFO World Group, examined financial literacy, perceptions, attitudes and actions among young adults aged 18 - 29. Nearly 60 percent of survey participants expect to be financially comfortable in five years, as opposed to 15 percent who feel that way now. Notably, only one percent expects to be struggling financially in five years.

Nearly 70 percent of those surveyed are confident in their ability to plan for their financial future. Many young adults have taken the first steps toward achieving these goals through sound money management skills. Over 60 percent of participants say they save money on a regular basis and try to follow a budget. And over three-fourths had either a savings or checking account.

Yet, the need for financial literacy remains. Less than one-quarter (24 percent) claim to have a good understanding of how to invest in the stock market or mutual funds, and only one-third (33 percent) feel comfortable taking financial risks if there is a possibility of gain. A majority of recent graduates know little or nothing about home mortgages or IRAs. Less than one-half of young adults pay off their credit card every month. And only 43 percent have established a "rainy day fund" for emergencies.

The survey suggests that while many young adults focus on financial independence, budgeting and saving for major purchases, meeting current or short-term needs remains a priority

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There is a fundamental need for financial education in our homes and schools. The survey suggests the largest resource for financial advice and guidance for this age group is parents (48 percent), while the Internet is the next most frequented source (16 percent). Only one percent of young adults seek financial advice and guidance from schools or colleges.

As parents and mentors, there is more we can do to help promote financial literacy. Basic money management fundamentals and the principle of consistently contributing to savings and investments early in life are valuable lessons we can pass along to our children. NOW

Clay Money is a State Farm agent based in Midlothian.









Back Pain Safety



Dr. James Ellis, an orthopedic surgeon on the medical staff at Baylor Medical Center at Waxahachie, offers the following tips for dealing with back pain, a common and complex condition. On average, about 25 percent of Americans experience chronic or sporadic back pain. There are many different possible causes, the most common being accidents, muscle strain and sports injuries. While many back injuries are minor and temporary, more serious injuries can include a fractured vertebra, a slipped vertebra or vertabrae and damage to nerve function called cervical radiculopathy.

"The majority of back pain that I see comes from people who have been injured," Dr. Ellis said.

Most back pain can be treated with a combination of therapies, including physical therapy, pain medication and/or anti-inflammatory medications. "In some cases, surgery may be required, but that all depends on the individual patient and their condition," Dr. Ellis said.

In most cases, back pain can be more annoying than debilitating. However, a trip to the doctor is advised should you feel numbness or tingling. Your doctor may use an X-ray, CT scan or MRI to further assist in pinpointing the area of concern.

To relieve common back pain:

Rest: If you have been doing strenuous activities such as moving or lifting heavy objects.

Heat: A heating pad can help to alleviate some of the pain and help increase your movement.



Strengthen: Working on your abdominal muscles can also help to internally support your spine.

Standing: While standing you should keep your head up and abdominal muscles pulled in. You should also avoid wearing high heels.

Sleeping: You may have to try out soft and hard mattresses in order to find one that will not give you back pain.

Sitting: When sitting in a chair it should be of an appropriate height for you and should give you adequate lumbar support. NOW

Physicians are members of the medical staff at one of Baylor Health Care System's subsidiary, community or affiliated medical centers, and are neither employees nor agents of those medical centers, Baylor Medical Center at Waxahachie or Baylor Health Care System.

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Pamela Cowan
Admissions Director

Color in the Shade

— By Nancy Fenton

Finally, the sun is shining through the lush green canopy. It would be great if I had more holes in that canopy! The heavy roof of leaves gives us shade from the scorching sun, but is hard on flowerbeds where we want some color. There are several ferns which do well in our alkaline soil that can give you multiple shades of green, and a few multicolored bulbs that can still brighten your beds. Holly fern is fairly large, about three feet tall and wide, with large dark green fronds. Japanese painted fern has multicolored white and green leaves and is a bit smaller. Both do well in shady areas and compete well with large trees! Autumn ferns are about 12 - 15 inches tall and make a great low border, and the old standard wood ferns survive well growing to about three feet in height.

If you mix them in with bright white, pink or red caladiums, they can really brighten a dark, shady bed. It really is not too late to plant caladiums, if you can find them. The bulbs themselves have a blooming life of about three months, so there is still time for them to come up and look great until fall. I just learned this spring that you can hurry the time from planting until they come up by soaking the bulbs for 30 minutes in warm water before you plant them. We still have August, September and October before the nights get cold, so give them a try!

Purple oxalis is another bulb that will come up year after year and will do well in the shade. It takes awhile, but will reward you with a low-growing splash of bright purple in a not-so-bright flowerbed. The bulbs are usually very small, so be prepared to put a lot of them in the ground! Then enjoy the rest of your summer and rest up for fall plantings! NOW

Nancy Fenton is a Master Gardener in Ellis County.



August 2007 Community Calendar

First and Third Tuesdays
Training Academy for Dental Assistants holds free informational sessions at 5:30 p.m. For details, call (972) 842-2999.

First and Third Thursdays
Midlothian Lions Club meets at 7 p.m. at Midlothian Civic Center, 224 S. 11th Street. For information, call (972) 775-7118.

Second and Fourth Mondays
Texas Ladies Networking meets from 11:45 a.m. - 1 p.m. at Fire Mountain Grill in Waxahachie. For information, call (214) 587-1221.

Second and Fourth Tuesdays
Toastmasters meets at 6:30 p.m. inside Baylorworx, 507 N. Hwy. 77 in Waxahachie.

Midlothian City Council meets at 6 p.m. at City Hall.

Second and Fourth Thursdays
"Leads to Success" Leads Group I meets at 8 a.m. at 2nd @ Main Place.

Every Tuesday
Midlothian Rotary Club meets at noon at Midlothian Civic Center, 224 South 11th Street. Call (972) 775-7118 for information.

August 1
Business Over Breakfast begins at 7:30 a.m. at the Midlothian Conference Center.

August 2
Small Business Committee Meeting begins at 9 a.m. at the Midlothian Chamber offices.

"Prediabetes" Seminar presented by Vonda Mayfield, RN, CDE from 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. at the Midlothian Wellness Center, 2210 Bryan Place. Free admission. Contact Vicki Hallum at (972) 775-7410 for information.

August 6
American Red Cross Swim Lessons, 1640 Twin Oaks. Visit stagedoorschoolofdance.com or call (972) 723-8199 for information.

August 7
The Thinkers Asylum for college students ages 18 - 26 at Busy B's Bakery. Live acoustic music, poetry sharing and performances, philosophical and theological discussions. Sponsored by Midlothian College Ministries from 9 p.m. - midnight. Call 972-723-0002, ext. 20 for information.

August 11
"Kids and Fitness" by Dr. David Williams from 10 -11 a.m. at the Midlothian Wellness Center. Free admission. Call Vicki Hallum at (972) 775-7410 for information.

August 14
"Look Good … Feel Better Program," sponsored by the American Cancer Society from 6:30 - 7:45 p.m. Program for women undergoing cancer treatments. A licensed cosmetologist provides a free workshop on makeup application and skin care. A complimentary makeup kit is provided to each participant. Midlothian Wellness Center, 2210 Bryan Place. Free admission. Call Vicki Hallum at (972) 775-7410 for information.

August 15
Midlothian High School Orientation, Seniors: 9:30 - 10:30 a.m. Juniors: 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Sophomores: 1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Orientation for Parents of Sophomores 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. in the MHS auditorium.

August 16
Fall Festival Committee Meeting begins at 3 p.m. at the Midlothian Chamber offices.

Freshman Panther Camp. Orientation sessions begin in the MHS auditorium. Freshman Girls: 9 - 11:30 a.m. Freshman Boys: 1 - 3:30 p.m.

Amateur Radio Club meets at 7:30 p.m. at the Waxahachie Fire Department station on Water Street. For information, visit wd5ddh.org.

August 20
American Red Cross Swim Lessons, 1640 Twin Oaks. Visit stagedoorschoolofdance.com or call (972) 723-8199 for more information.

Middle School Orientation (Sixth Grade): 6:30 p.m.

August 21
Middle School Orientation (Seventh Grade): 6:30 p.m.

August 23
MISD Elementary "Meet the Teacher Night" (Pre-K – Fifth Grade): 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. at each elementary campus.

Middle School Orientation (Eighth Grade): 6:30 p.m.

August 25
Cedar Hill Saddle Club "Open Playday" begins at 11 a.m. at 1531 N. Mockingbird Lane. $2 per event; $1 per exhibition run.

August 27
Software development certificate offered by Navarro College in conjunction with local business and industry. Contact Katy Long at katy.long@navarrocollege.edu or by calling (903) 875-7572.

Creative Quilters Guild of Ellis County meets at St. Paul Episcopal Church, Hwy. 287 at Ovilla Rd., Waxahachie. 7 p.m. Visit CQGuild.org for information.

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Leigh Nordstrom, M.D.

Family Practice
Karen Yeh, M.D.
Chad Coleman, M.D.
Matthew Moreland, D.O.

Pediatrics
Shirley Joslin, M.D.

Nurse Practitioner
Judy Davis, R.N., F.N.P.

Leigh F. Nordstrom, M.D.

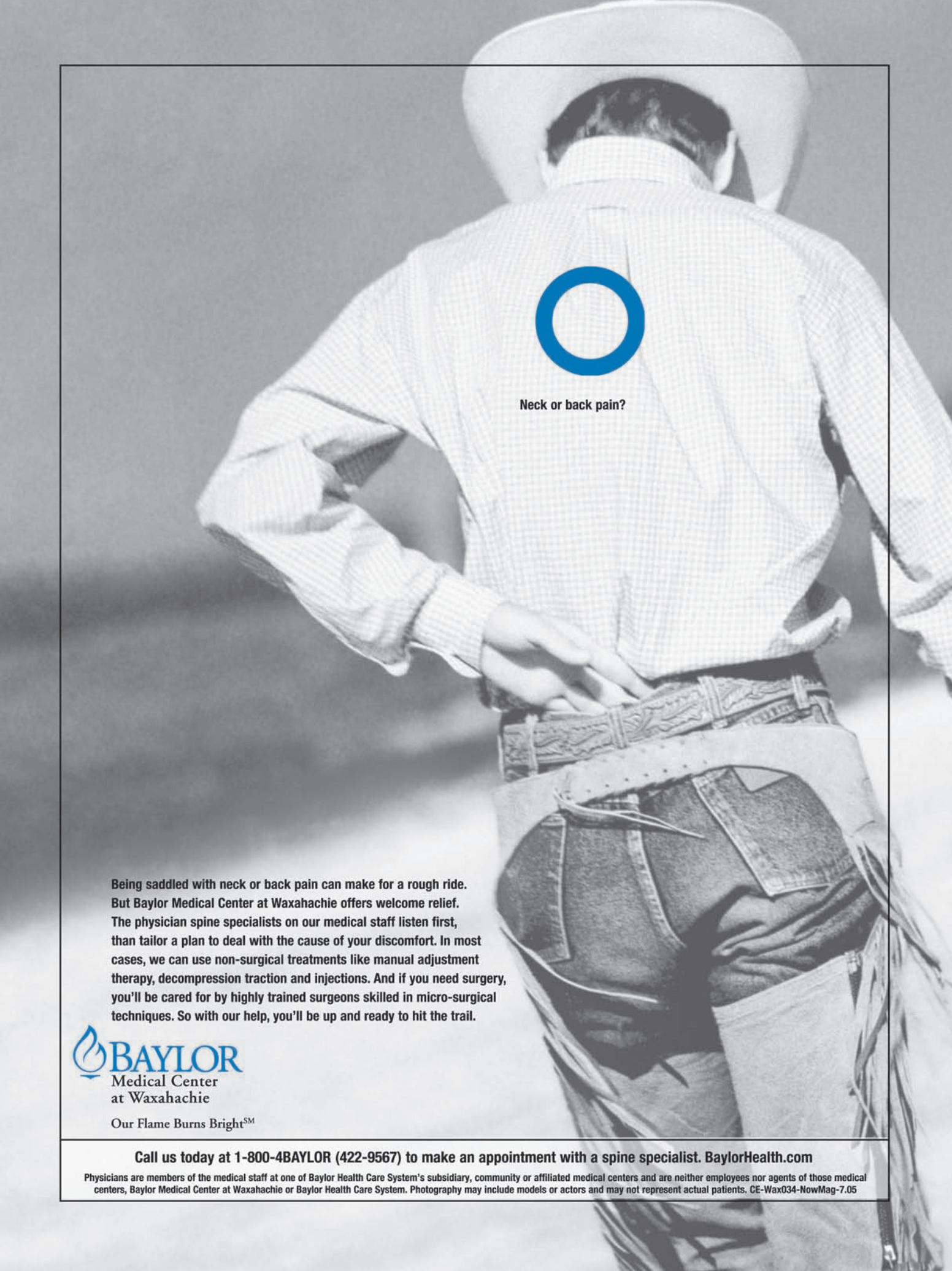


Board certified in Internal Medicine, Dr. Nordstrom received her medical degree from Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Medicine in Lubbock and her internship and residency at Indiana University Department of Medicine in Indianapolis.

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Being saddled with neck or back pain can make for a rough ride. But Baylor Medical Center at Waxahachie offers welcome relief. The physician spine specialists on our medical staff listen first, than tailor a plan to deal with the cause of your discomfort. In most cases, we can use non-surgical treatments like manual adjustment therapy, decompression traction and injections. And if you need surgery, you'll be cared for by highly trained surgeons skilled in micro-surgical techniques. So with our help, you'll be up and ready to hit the trail.

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